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Childrens Services Improvement Board Chair – Stuart Smith

Wednesday 10th July 2019 1.30 pm to 4.00 pm
Bronte/Priestley Room, Margaret McMillan Tower

Attendees:

Name	Job Title
Stuart Smith	Chair
Mark Douglas	Strategic Director Children’s Services
Ian Tomlinson	Children’s Improvement Programme Director
Alisa Newman	District Commander, West Yorkshire Police
Maggie Smallridge	West Yorkshire Probation
Heather Lacey	Primary School representative
Marium Haque	Deputy Director Education and Learning
Helen Hirst	Bradford Clinical Commissioning Group’s accountable officer
Jenny Cryer	AD Performance, Commissioning and Partnerships CBMDC
Ali-Jan Haider	Director of Strategic Partnerships Executive Lead for Bradford Districts CCG
Peter Horner	Barnardos Young Lives VCS representative (on behalf of Janice Hawkes)
Sue Thompson	Designated Nurse CCG
Michelle Turner	Director of Quality of Nursing
Jane Booth	Chair Bradford Safeguarding Children Board
Helene Stewart	DfE Case Lead – Local Authority Interventions (Jobshare)
Bev Wilson	DfE Case Lead – Local Authority Interventions (Jobshare)
Traci Taylor	Principal Social Worker Bradford
Kersten England	Chief Executive
Joanne Hyde	Strategic Director Corporate Resources
Chris Chapman	Section 151 Officer Finance
Lyndsey Brown	Headteacher, Oastlers School
Rachel Stirland	District Achievement Partnership (DAP) representative
In attendance	
Anne Chester-Walsh	Interim AD Social Care Improvement CBMDC
Anne Lloyd	Director Human Resources CBMDC
Phil Witcherley	Head of Policy and Performance OCX
Laura Copley	Senior Business data Intelligence Officer OCX
Heidi Hardy	Programme Support Officer (minutes)
Apologies	
Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe	Leader of the Council
Cllr Adrian Farley	Lead Portfolio Holder Children and Families
Cllr Mike Gibbons	Chair of Children’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Ann Baxter	Local Government Associate
Fiona Broadfoot	Build a Girl Project Director

	<p><i>0027 – Build a Girl Project update</i> Fiona Broadfoot scheduled to bring a report back to the Board in September.</p> <p>Action: It was agreed to send an update on the Build a Girl Project to the Board asap.</p> <p><i>0008 - Recommendation 41 – This is a recommendation that elected members should regularly undertake unsupervised visits to front line social care offices and discuss with the social workers their workloads, working conditions, supervision and management oversight as well as practical premises related issues.</i></p> <p>Action: Daniel Crampton advised that a report on Recommendation 41 needs to go to Corporate Parenting for formal decision and will report back to next Children’s Services Improvement Board in September 2019.</p> <p>Action: 0002 – Children’s Trust – alignment with the Children’s Improvement Board. Jenny Cryer and Ali-Jan Haider to bring a report to this board in September.</p>	<p>FB</p> <p>FB/HH</p> <p>JC/AJH</p>
<p>6.1</p>	<p>Mark Douglas – Welcome to Bradford The Board welcomed Mark Douglas in his new role as Strategic Director Children’s Services.</p>	
<p>6.2</p>	<p>Update on Monitoring Visit 2nd of monitoring visits took place over two days on 11th and 12th June 2019. The findings and all future letters will be published on the Ofsted website. It was noted there are still till fundamental challenges including issues around management grip, quality of social work which is too variable and the rate of progress. On a positive note no children were found to be at risk and progress was seen in social work reflected through case files. CP concerns that were identified were responded to in a timely manner. Staff are positive about working for Bradford including the training offered and keen to further improve. A lot of work is underway to ensure preparations are underway for the next visit and staff continue to be supported. The next visit is due late autumn and will focus on CP plans, children on the edge of care and the quality of management, supervision and grip of cases.</p> <p>MD stressed that we ensure we respond to fundamental challenges raised in the Ofsted letter.</p> <p>HL asked whether training will be put in place for social workers who have not done CP meetings before. MD assured HT that training and support will be looked at and tailored for all staff and that all staff will have mandatory Back to Basics Training.</p> <p>It was agreed that it would be helpful for partners to help prepare for the next visit collectively and attend all meetings where required. Help is also required around the front door multi agency and continuum of need process. MD to ensure feedback from the Front Door to all partners.</p> <p>Jane Booth confirmed that all partners would provide their action plans however some areas will not be able to complete this work until as late as possibly December. Statistics on contacts and referrals and where they go will be available before then and work will be underway.</p> <p>Action: MD to set up a meeting to look at Audits and outcomes and Jenny’s team to work on the audit. MD assured a plan to be developed and where work is allocated to a SW that the action is SMART, tasks are owned by partners and we are</p>	<p>MD</p>

	<p>clear that we have completed these.</p> <p>It was noted that as standards rise expectations will also rise on partner agencies. MD felt it would be good to sense test action plans to see if fit for purpose and if not get a plan in place to improve these.</p> <p>It was agreed that it was essential to develop a clear Early Help offer that shows clear routes for signposting and advice that is used across the localities and that the high numbers of NFA's and low conversion form contact to referral is addressed. MD explained that the remodelling work will take slightly longer.</p>	
<p>7.1</p>	<p>Audit Report</p> <p>JC presented the audit update report based on Audit activity in May. It was noted there has been significant moderation on auditing. Overall a number of audit areas of consideration show some significant issues that are still proving to be a challenge.</p> <p>CP and CIN cases over 15 months or more. Some improvements were found and some effective multi agency work was evidenced. Issues around resources need to be addressed, timeliness visits and supervision needs urgent improvement.</p> <p>32 of 71 June audits have been received back this far and Jenny has extended the deadline. The return rate is being addressed by management. Corrective actions are beginning to be tracked and this was welcomed by the chair.</p> <p>JC advised in terms of CIN and CPLAC that the IRO role is slightly different in Bradford and that IROs do not undertake LAC reviews as well as chairing CP conferences. It was recognised that drift and delay stand out as issues and these were not being challenged appropriately via supervision or management oversight . JC agreed need to work out as a system how CP is dealt with through supervision. JC advised that future reports to show the trajectory relating to compliance in all areas.</p> <p>JC confirmed that a feedback report on the PIP support visit provided by East Riding in terms of QA systems to be provided on 24th July to the Strategic Director Children's Services (and copied to Stuart Smith).</p>	
<p>7.2</p>	<p>Vital Signs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was agreed that performance metrics outlined in the vital signs report be noted. PW confirmed that a report will also go to Children's O&S to give Members the chance to monitor the areas for Improvement. Executive and Council will continue to look at measures in key areas. A summary of the audit report will eventually be integrated into the Vital Signs report. The key points from the report were:- • Many of the key indicators for May had show a significant drop in performance and PW said that the June figures which had not been available at the time of the may report deadline were showing an improvement on the may data. • Re-referrals are included as pure contacts but can be provided as a separate report along with other deep dives. • Jenny's Audit work to look at cases re-referred and reasons for referrals. • CP plans – uplift in rates of children – weekly update of cases coming up to and over 1 year trying to get these down. • LAC numbers have shown a significant increase – the planning assumption expected this and comparisons are made with statistical neighbours and nationally. Demand is already high and it is expected to rise further. It was stressed that there is no additional resource to meet this. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was noted that all partners, not just the council's social care teams are impacted by high numbers of Looked After Children. NHS colleagues and CAMHS in particular are challenged by high numbers of vulnerable Looked After Children. Timeliness in relation to LAC and CP cases have declined - ACW assured the committee that the service is looking to address the issues and ensure that the expectation of timeliness needs to be addressed urgently. The system now accurately captures timescales and early June data shows some improvement in timeliness. <p>Action: PW to look at timeliness of the reporting to the Improvement Board and to O&S and some aspects of the vital signs report could be presented as a live document rather than a paper document that has data somewhat out of date by the time of the meeting.</p> <p><i>Deep dive into percentage of care leavers aged 16-21 living in suitable accommodation.</i></p> <p>Action: MD to find out how many 16-18 year olds in unregulated placements and report back to the Improvement Board</p>	<p>PW</p> <p>MD</p>
8.1	<p>12 week plan for next Ofsted Monitoring visit The next visit will focus on CIN, CP and PLO. The 12 week plan currently goes to the weekly Internal Board and to the Programme Board. This will be rag rated.</p> <p>Action: JB to have a conversation with Mark Griffin around priority 2 tracking and monitoring.</p> <p>Action: Continuum of Need is currently sitting with Cath Knowles as chair of sub group and the Improvement Plan needs to be amended to reflect this.</p> <p><i>Supervision of staff</i> Discussion took place around tracking of supervisions and quality reflection on files. MD stressed the need to get compliance with the basic social care duties significantly improved if OFSTED are to be convinced that there is sufficient capacity to improve.</p> <p>Action: Ian to ensure the 12 week plan is rag rated.</p>	<p>JB</p> <p>HH</p> <p>IT</p>
8.2	<p>Children's Improvement Mapping A meetings mapping diagram was shared for information. A wider piece of work is underway led by the Chief Executive and Leader around meeting process mapping. MD has tasked JC with looking at internal meetings and determine the value and effectiveness of meetings.</p> <p>The Chair will continue to ensure progress of the improvement plan is reviewed but not all in one go but through Deep Dives.</p>	
9.1	<p>HR update It was noted that there was some challenge from some social workers who has not been included in the remuneration uplift and formal processes are on-going as a result.</p> <p>Recruitment is on-going and there have been positive changes to vacancy control procedures which can now be completed more swiftly. Finance and HR business partner checks are being undertaken remotely rather than awaiting for a panel to convene. Agency workers currently remain at a high level and a peripatetic team is still in place. There has been a reduction in permanent social worker leavers. There needs to be a</p>	

	<p>focus on this high numbers of staff who are leaving in the first 2 years of their career and how this can be addressed. More BME workers have been recruited than have left the organisation in recent months.</p> <p><i>Workforce performance</i> 2% increase from April to May. Looking at any training issues and service plans. A new business partner will work with managers to ensure cases are progressed on HR Plus in a correct and timely manner. Staff are benefitting from mental health and wellbeing surgeries held with Remploy. A leadership and diagnostics management session will take place in the future. Looking at support and high challenge showing staff what they need to do in terms of supervision etc.</p> <p><i>What good looks like</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking at reducing sickness levels by providing effective Occupational Health /absence support. • Attraction and recruitment strategy in place and embedded. Effective local and corporate induction. It is hoped that through these measures that leavers rates stabilise. • Performance appraisals – It is anticipated that sustainable improvement will be seen from Autumn. <p>It was agreed that social care approaches to supervision and regular performance appraisal need to be recorded by social care managers and captured within the corporate HR data</p> <p>Action: MD to review performance appraisals targets and set a more stretching target and to remind all Children’s Services staff to use the corporate HR recording system.</p> <p>Action: AL currently looking into how the system can be modified to allow for teaching staff to record information.</p> <p>Action: Anne Lloyd will continue to plot what good looks like over a period of time and the report will show the trajectory working towards good.</p>	<p>MD</p> <p>AL</p> <p>AL</p>
<p>9.2</p>	<p>Evaluation of Lunch and Learn sessions</p> <p>Traci Taylor updated on the bite-sized training sessions which were introduced as part of the Bradford Basics programme. TT has spoken with teams and will continue to ensure all staff have seen the guidance. This compliments a really good training package and links in with CPD and the appraisal system ensuring that team managers and staff have support. Training will be mandatory and targeted.</p> <p>MD agreed there is a need to put together a very clear mandatory programme which is monitored through appraisals.</p>	
<p>9.3</p>	<p>BCSB update</p> <p>Jane Booth gave an update on work against the action plan. The guidance around consent, information sharing and fostering has been re-issued. Launch event taking place today for the Continuum of Need. Will be reviewed in 6 months. 2 more sessions are planned for September and online resources available.</p> <p>Action: JB will report on Continuum of Need progress in Oct/Nov.</p>	<p>JB</p>

	<p>JB reported that a PLO/CIN/CP/LAC audit has been completed and the report will be circulated with the minutes. Work happening on Back to Basics and new memorandums of understanding to be produced. LA auditing looking at processes as part of new arrangements.</p>	
9.4	<p>Independent visiting (Regulation 44) The board noted the contents of the report. It was agreed to bring a report on a regular basis in order that the trajectory can be seen. The report also needs to go to Corporate Parenting Panel.</p> <p>Action: JC to ask Suzanne Lythgow to update the report accordingly so that the trajectory, particularly of the improvement actions at each home can be summarised and then seen by both the Improvement Board and the Corporate Parenting committee.</p>	<p>JC</p>
10.1	<p>Staff reference group update The board recognised that following changes made, staff felt they are more listened to. They especially found the staff engagement sessions, performance meetings, MASH listening sessions and new tablets helpful. Overall morale is positive.</p>	
11.1	<p>CQC Children Looked After and Safeguarding (CLAS) Review and Action Plan Michelle Turner and Sue Thompson provided an update and provided a summary of findings following the review including areas of good practice. It was highlighted that the document is a health action plan. Focus on safeguarding arrangements for all children and areas for improvement. Recommendations are highlighted within the document.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Children's Services Improvement Board receive regular highlight report from this health Action Plan. KE explained that a progress report will be presented to the ICB and feedback will be provided to this board. An update will also be presented to the Safeguarding Board.</p> <p>Action: MT to bring a regular overall progress synopsis and exception report on the action plan for Health in terms of Children Looked After (CLA) to future Improvement Board meetings. (The chair suggests every two cycles ie 3 months)</p>	<p>MT</p>
11.2	<p>Families First – update on Payment by Results – Anne Chester-Walsh Project team now in place. Target gone up to 17% however needs to increase rapidly by September. The Youth Offending Team (YOT) are on board and partner agencies are working with the Local Authority on this.</p> <p>This work will need to become embedded as part of the Early Help programme. Partner agencies need to be involved and the Strategic Board has started to look at this. It is noted that this is currently being picked up by Anne Chester-Walsh.</p>	
11.3	<p>Front Door to Children's Social Care – Contacts made with no further action (NFA) Anne Chester-Walsh A discussion took place around the type of contacts including DV (domestic violence) and how the process is managed. A detailed analysis will be presented at the MASH Strategic Board for discussion.</p> <p>Action: A review of the findings to be presented back at the Improvement Board in September for approval and comment.</p>	<p>ACW</p>

12.	AOB None.	
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Future meetings	
Date and time	Venue
Thurs 5 Sept - 1.30 pm to 5.00 pm	Committee Room 1, City Hall
Wed 16 Oct - 1.30 pm to 4.30 pm	Hockney Room, Margaret McMillan Tower
Wed 4 Dec - 1.30 pm to 4.30 pm	Hockney Room, Margaret McMillan Tower